

## Snack

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Guide preschoolers to clean their areas. Take a restroom break and wash hands. Gather preschoolers for snack time. Thank God for the snack.

Serve 10 crackers or 10 pretzel sticks (or any snack in a group of ten). Invite preschoolers to count to 10 after you have finished passing out the snack. As the children are eating, remind them that God gave His people 10 rules to show that He is holy. The first four commandments talk about loving God.

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert download
- snack food
- paper cups and napkins

## Transition

When a child finishes his snack, guide him to throw away any trash. He may select a book or puzzle to examine, play quietly with play dough or a favorite toy, or color the Bible story coloring page.

Offer the journal page and invite preschoolers to draw a picture of themselves obeying one of God's commands. Pray for the children.

**SAY** • Dear God, thank You for being holy. Thank You for always doing what is right and good! Thank You, God, for sending Your Son, Jesus, to come to earth to rescue us from sin. Thank You, Jesus, for dying on the cross and coming back to life to save us, even though You never disobeyed God. Thank You for changing our hearts to love You and obey You when we trust in You. Amen.

If parents are picking up their children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.

- Journal Page printable, 1 per child
- Bible Story Coloring Page
- crayons
- Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschool

# Unit 5: Christmas

## Unit Description:

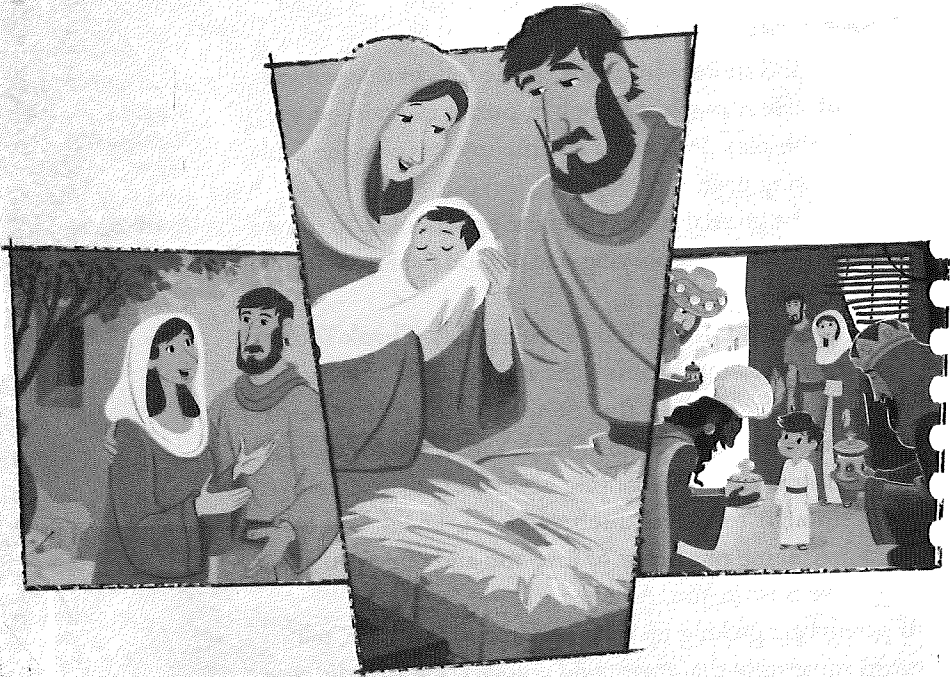
God sent His Son, Jesus, to earth to be born as a baby in humble surroundings. Jesus was no ordinary baby. He was the One who would save God's people from their sin. Christmas is the time to celebrate God's greatest gift of Jesus Christ.

## Key Passage:

Galatians 4:4-5

## Big Picture Question:

Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us.



# Unit 5: Christmas

## Session 1:

**Bible Story:**

Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph

**Bible Passage:**

*Luke 1:26-56; Matthew 1:18-24*

**Main Point:**

God chose a family for Jesus.

## Session 2:

**Bible Story:**

Jesus Was Born

**Bible Passage:**

*Luke 2:1-20*

**Main Point:**

Jesus was born as God promised.

## Session 3:

**Bible Story:**

Wise Men Visited Jesus

**Bible Passage:**

*Matthew 2:1-21*

**Main Point:**

The wise men worshiped Jesus.

## Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** Luke 1:26-56; Matthew 1:18-24

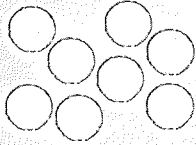
**MAIN POINT:** God chose a family for Jesus.

**KEY PASSAGE:** Galatians 4:4-5

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us.

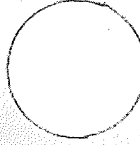
**SMALL GROUP OPENING**  
(15–20 MINUTES)

**PAGE 72**



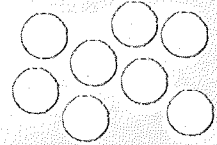
**LARGE GROUP BIBLE STUDY**  
(10–15 MINUTES)

**PAGE 74**



**SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES**  
(20–25 MINUTES)

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## Leader BIBLE STUDY

People had been waiting a long time for Jesus. God hinted at His coming in the garden of Eden when He promised a seed to conquer the serpent. (Gen. 3:15) The prophets told of His coming hundreds of years before His birth. God was working out His plan to bring His people back to Himself.

In the Bible, God sometimes used angels to communicate His message to people. Angels spoke to Abraham in Genesis 18. The Angel of the Lord spoke to Balaam in Numbers 22. Now Mary and Joseph, the earthly parents of Jesus, each received a special visit from an angel to announce the birth of God's promised Messiah.

The angel Gabriel's announcement to Mary surprised her. By His grace, God chose Mary to be the mother of Jesus. The angel's message revealed much about this promised child.

First, He would be great in both being and nature. He would be the Son of the Most High. Jesus is the Son of God, and the Lord God promised to give Him the throne of His father David. These words fulfilled the prophecy given to David in 2 Samuel 7:12-16. He would reign over the house of Jacob forever. His kingdom would have no end.

The good news that Jesus was coming into the world was good news because of why He was coming. An angel revealed Jesus' purpose to Joseph in Matthew 1:21, "He will save His people from their sins." The gospel is the good news of what God has done for us through Christ.

The announcement of Jesus' birth is not the beginning of the gospel; God had been planning for this moment since before the beginning of time. (See Eph. 1:3-10.) Help the preschoolers you teach understand that God's plan has always been to save sinners and bring them back to Himself. Jesus, whose name means "Yahweh saves," is the culmination of that plan.



**MINISTRY GRID**  
training made simple

Additional resources for each session are available at *[gospelproject.com](http://gospelproject.com)*. For free training and session-by-session help, visit *[www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject](http://www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject)*.

# The BIBLE STORY

## Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph

*Luke 1:26-56; Matthew 1:18-24*

**One day, God sent an angel named Gabriel to a town called Nazareth. The angel went to visit a young woman named Mary. Mary was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph.**

The angel said to Mary, “God is happy with you! He is with you.” Mary was afraid and unsure. Why would God be happy with her? She had done nothing special.

“Do not be afraid,” **the angel** said. He **told Mary that she was going to have a very special baby. The baby’s name would be Jesus.**

Mary asked the angel, “How can that happen?”

**The angel said, “God will be the father of the baby. The baby will be God’s Son.”**

Then the angel said, “God can do anything!” **He told Mary that her relative Elizabeth was pregnant, even though she was old and did not have any children.**

“May everything happen just as you said,” Mary said. Then the angel left.

**Mary hurried to Elizabeth’s house. When she arrived, the baby inside Elizabeth leaped for joy! The Holy Spirit filled Elizabeth and she said, “What an honor, Mary! You and your baby will be blessed!”**

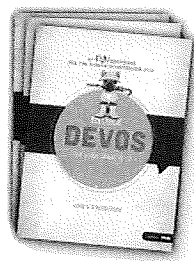
Mary was so happy. She **praised God with a song about how great God is.** Mary knew families in the future would say she was blessed because God was going to do great things through Jesus. God had kept His promise to Abraham to bless the whole world through Jesus. Mary stayed with Elizabeth for three months. Then she went home.

Joseph found out Mary was going to have a baby, but Joseph knew it was not his baby; Mary and Joseph were not married yet! Soon after Joseph thought these things, an angel appeared to him in a dream.

“Joseph!” the angel said. “Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. Mary is going to have a son. Name Him Jesus because He is going to save His people from their sins!”

When Joseph woke up, he did just what the angel said. He married Mary, and when she had a son, Joseph named Him Jesus.

*Christ Connection: Many of God's prophets talked about Jesus before He was born. Everything they said about Jesus came true. Before God created the world, He planned to send Jesus. Jesus came to do God's plan, to rescue people from sin.*



**WANT TO  
DISCOVER  
GOD'S WORD?  
GET  
MORE!**

Invite preschoolers to check out this week's devotionals to discover that the angel told Mary and Joseph to name the baby Jesus. (Luke 2:21) Jesus, whose name means "the Lord saves," was born to rescue us from sin. Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out [www.lifeway.com/devotionals](http://www.lifeway.com/devotionals).

# Small Group OPENING

**SESSION TITLE:** Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** Luke 1:26-56; Matthew 1:18-24

**MAIN POINT:** God chose a family for Jesus.

**KEY PASSAGE:** Galatians 4:4-5

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us.

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## Welcome time

- "Joy to the World" song
- offering basket
- Allergy Alert download
- favorite toys related to the Bible story theme

Play the unit theme song in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow your church's security procedures. Set an offering basket near the door to collect at an appropriate time. Post an allergy alert, if necessary. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

## Activity page


- "Where's Mary and Joseph?" activity page, 1 per child
- pencils or crayons

Guide preschoolers to use the key to identify and circle Mary and Joseph in the picture.

**SAY** • God chose a family on earth for His Son, Jesus. Out of all the people in the entire world, God chose Mary and Joseph to be Jesus' earthly parents. Mary and Joseph were just ordinary people like everyone else. They were not special, but God gave them a very special job. In today's story, we will hear how God told them His plan.

## Sign Jesus' name

Teach the preschoolers to sign *Jesus*. To perform the sign for *Jesus*, touch the tip of the middle finger of your right hand into the center of your left palm. Then touch the tip of the middle finger of your left hand to your right palm. Invite



LOW PREP

Tip: Check out sign language tutorials online for extra practice before class if needed.



## Talk about the Bible story

**SAY** • God chose a family for Jesus when He came to earth. God the Son was in heaven with God since the beginning of time. Before God created the world, He planned to send Jesus. Jesus came to do God's plan, to rescue people from sin.

Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline or big story circle as you ask the following review questions:

1. What special job did God give Mary? (*Jesus' mommy*)
2. Who did Mary go see after the angel told her the special news? (*her relative, Elizabeth*)
3. What special job did God give Joseph? (*Jesus' earthly daddy*)
4. Whose son is Jesus? (*God's*)

• Main Point Poster  
• Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

## Learn the big picture question

**SAY** • Our big picture question is, *Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us.* God sent Jesus to earth from heaven to rescue people from sin. Rescuing people from sin is a job only God's Son could do.

• Big Picture Question Poster

## Practice the key passage

Open your Bible to Galatians 4:4-5. Read the key passage aloud several times. Sing together the key passage song, "Adoption As Sons."

**SAY** • Our key passage says that Jesus was born to rescue us from sin. Everyone who has ever been born—except for Jesus—has broken God's law. We sinned. But Jesus was born to rescue us from sin!

• Key Passage Poster  
• "Adoption As Sons" song

## Transition to small groups

# Small Group ACTIVITIES

**SESSION TITLE:** Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph

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- Bible times dress-up clothes

## Play out the Bible story

Provide Bible times clothes such as robes, belts, and scarves for the preschoolers to use to play out the Bible story. As the children are playing out the story, ask them simple review questions.

**SAY** • Mary and Joseph were not movie stars. They were not rich or famous. **God chose a family for Jesus** out of ordinary people so Jesus could do something amazing. Jesus came to do God's plan to rescue people from sin.

## Silhouette art

Provide a copy of "Silhouette Family" for each preschooler. Invite preschoolers to use pieces of colored tissue paper to lay over the silhouette drawing of a mother, father, and baby. Older children may use paintbrushes to paint white glue onto their paper before they apply the tissue paper. For younger children, adult leaders may paint on the glue and allow the children to place the tissue paper on top of the glue. Keep wipes handy for cleanup.

**SAY** • **God chose a family for Jesus**, His very own Son. Does anyone remember whom God chose to be Jesus' earthly parents? [*Invite children to respond.*]

the children to follow your lead in signing Jesus' name until they have memorized it. Sing "Jesus Loves Me" several times while using the sign for *Jesus*.

**SAY** • Jesus is God's Son! God sent Jesus from heaven to live on earth so that He could one day rescue God's people from sin. Today we are going to hear that God chose two people to be Jesus' family.

## Push the baby relay

Line up the preschoolers in two single-file lines across from one another. Provide one baby doll and a toy stroller if available. Instruct the first child in one line to push the baby in the stroller to the first child in the other line and then go to the back of the new line. The child who has received the baby will then push the stroller to the next child in the opposite line. Continue until every child has completed the relay.

**SAY** • You did a great job keeping the baby safe as you played our game! Babies need mommies and daddies to keep them safe and give them what they need. Today we're going to learn that God had a plan to give Jesus a family when He came to earth as a baby.

## Transition to Bible study

To gain the attention of all the preschoolers to move them to Bible study, show the countdown video, flip off the lights, or clap a simple rhythm for the children to copy. Choose one girl and one boy at a time and invite them to move to Bible study.



- baby doll
- doll stroller (optional)

Tip: If you don't have a doll stroller, preschoolers may simply hold the baby throughout the relay.

- countdown video (optional)

# Large Group LEADER

**SESSION TITLE:** Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** Luke 1:26-56; Matthew 1:18-24

**MAIN POINT:** God chose a family for Jesus.

**KEY PASSAGE:** Galatians 4:4-5

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us.

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## Introduce the Bible story

• baby pictures (optional)

Once the preschoolers are seated, talk about how babies need their mommies and daddies to love them and take care of them so that they can grow. Consider providing baby pictures of yourself or members of your family to help preschoolers make the connection that babies grow to be children then adults.

**SAY** • All of us were born as tiny babies. We needed our mommies and daddies to take care of us. God sent Jesus to earth as a baby, so God chose a special family for Jesus.

## Watch or tell the Bible story

• Bible  
• "Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph" video  
• Bible Story Picture Poster

Open your Bible to Luke 1 or Matthew 1. Mention that this story is in the New Testament. Briefly explain you are breaking from Moses for Christmas.

**SAY** • God gives us His words in the Bible. Every story in the Bible happened in real life. The Bible is true. The Bible is the most important book ever.

Show the video "Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph" or tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided. Use the bolded version for younger preschoolers.

That's right! God chose Mary and Joseph to be Jesus' earthly parents. Before God created the world, He planned to send Jesus. Jesus came to do God's plan, to rescue people from sin.

## Sequencing pictures

Print and cut out the sequencing picture printable. Invite the preschoolers to place the illustrations in the order the events happened. Assist the children in sequencing the pictures by briefly reminding them of what is happening in each illustration.

• "Sequencing Pictures" printable

**SAY** • Great job putting the pictures in the correct order! It's important for us to know the order in which everything happened so that we can remember that Jesus came to earth in a special way.

Jesus is God's Son. God sent Jesus to earth as a baby so He could grow up to rescue us from sin.

**God chose a family for Jesus.** Mary and Joseph were Jesus' earthly family.

## Sing songs to worship Jesus

Play the unit theme song or another worship song for the preschoolers and invite them to sing and dance with you. Encourage the children to clap and sing along. You may also provide rhythm instruments for children to play if you have them available.

• "Joy to the World" song (optional)  
• rhythm instruments (optional)

**SAY** • **God chose a family for Jesus.** Mary worshiped God for choosing her to be Jesus' mother. She was so happy that God was going to keep His promise to rescue people from sin. Many of God's prophets talked about Jesus before He was born. Everything they said about Jesus came true.

• books about biological, blended, and adoptive families

Tip: Be sensitive to children's home situations.

## Read books about families

Provide books for the preschoolers to look through that have pictures of biological families (moms and dads with children born into their homes), blended families (stepparents and stepchildren), and adoptive families (moms and dads adopting or fostering children). As the children are flipping through books, point out the differences and similarities of the families. Remind the children that not all families look alike, but God puts all families together in different ways.

**SAY** • Look at all the different families. Some families are big; some families are small. Some parents have lots of children, but other ones have one child. Some families do not have any children. Some children live with their mommy and daddy, but others live with one parent and visit their other parent. Some mommies grow their children in their bellies, and some families adopt their children from different countries.

All families are different, but God has created every single family! **God chose a family for Jesus**, and God chose a family for you. God chose you to be born or adopted into your family!

## Snack

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Guide preschoolers to clean their areas. Take a restroom break and wash hands. Gather preschoolers for snack time. Thank God for the snack.

Serve a favorite snack for the preschoolers. Talk about how God sent Jesus to earth as a baby. Babies cannot eat snacks like the preschoolers are eating. Babies need their mommies and daddies to take care of them. **God chose a family for Jesus** so He could grow up to rescue us from sin.

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert download
- snack food
- paper cups and napkins

## Transition

When a child finishes his snack, guide him to throw away any trash. He may select a book or puzzle to examine, play quietly with play dough or a favorite toy, or color the Bible story coloring page.

Offer the journal page and invite preschoolers to draw a picture of Mary celebrating God's plan to send Jesus. Children may also draw other scenes from the Bible story. Invite children to talk about their artwork. Pray for the children.

**SAY** • Dear God, thank You for choosing a family for Jesus to take care of Him as a baby. Thank You for keeping Your promise to send Jesus to rescue us from sin when we trust in Him. Help us to love You and worship You like Mary did. Amen!

If parents are picking up their children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.

- Journal Page printable, 1 per child
- Bible Story Coloring Page
- crayons
- Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschool